

September 2014 WIC Messenger Special Edition

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Changes in Allowed Milk

The United States Department of Agriculture has made some rule changes which affect the type of milk which may be provided to WIC Program participants.

Effective October 1, 2014, most WIC participants will receive checks allowing only 1% or nonfat (skim) milk. Reduced fat milks (2% and 1 ½%) or whole milk will be allowed only if specified on WIC checks.

Update on Minimum Stocking Requirement for Milk

The minimum stocking requirement for milk is:

8 gallons **AND** 4 half-gal **AND** 2 quarts

Any combination of **whole, 1%, or non-fat (skim) milk**

Remember, your store can be assessed a penalty if it does not maintain the minimum stock that WIC requires. Your delivery schedule is not an excuse for not maintaining minimum stocking at all times. **2% milk is no longer counted** when considering whether you have met your minimum stocking requirement or not.

No Signatures In Colored Ink!

Recently, we have seen many checks rejected by the bank because the WIC customer signed their check in a colored ink. Most bank equipment can only read blue or black ink, thus causing the checks signed in red or other colored inks to reject for missing signature. Your bank may charge you fees for these rejected checks and the WIC Program will not reimburse your store for the bank fees. Be sure that the customer signs their WIC checks on the front, lower right corner in blue or black ink only.



Enfamil Reguline Formula Added To WIC Formula List

Effective October 1, 2014, Enfamil Reguline infant formula has been added to our list of standard infant formulas. This powdered formula comes in a 12.4 ounce can. Enfamil Reguline Ready-To-Feed has not been added and will not be allowed. Below are the standard formulas allowed by WIC:

Maine CDC WIC Nutrition Program Standard Infant Formulas



Enfamil Newborn (Birth-3 months)
12.5 ounce powder



Enfamil Infant
12.5 ounce powder
13 ounce concentrate
32 ounce ready to feed



Enfamil Gentlease
12.4 ounce powder
32 ounce ready to feed



Enfamil Reguline
12.4 ounce powder



Enfamil AR
12.9 ounce powder
32 ounce ready to feed



Enfamil ProSobee
12.9 ounce powder
13 ounce concentrate
32 ounce ready to feed

Changes in WIC Policies as of October 1, 2014



Please be aware that as of October 1 (pending approval by FNS) there will be several changes in WIC Vendor Policies. These policies will be updated on the website at www.WICforME.com.

Policies with proposed major changes include:

VM-1: Vendor Selection and Authorization– Vendors must be willing to participate in the eWIC process. This includes, but is not limited to: submitting surveys, attending informational meetings, engaging in any necessary contracts with FIS, achieving tier 3 certification of the store eWIC processing system (either integrated or stand beside systems), and abiding by any new policy changes based on eWIC.

VM-2: Vendor Training– All vendors will be required to maintain a training log in the store to document that all personnel who transact sales are trained in the WIC transaction process. Training received by any member of the vendor's team must be passed on to all cashiers **and documented in the training log**. All information on WIC transactions and any changes to those processes from in-person or on-line training as well as newsletters or special bulletins must be relayed to staff and documented. A sample log can be found at the vendor section of the website. The training log must be available to WIC staff during visits to the store. Practice by training your staff on the information contained in this newsletter!

VM-6: Vendor Sanction System, Other Disqualifications, and Causes for Termination– There are a lot of changes here including incorporating the other reasons a vendor could be disqualified or terminated. Also, there are several new reasons for state sanction points including the following:

- 3.16 First incident of intentionally or unintentionally charging the State more for authorized WIC foods than is permitted under the vendor agreement. 10 points
- 3.17 First incident of charging the Maine CDC WIC Nutrition Program for WIC foods not received by the WIC customer. 10 points
- 3.18 First incident of providing credit or non-food items, other than alcohol, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, cash, firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances, in exchange for WIC FIs. 10 points
- 3.19 First incident of providing unauthorized food items in exchange for FIs, including charging for supplemental foods provided in excess of those listed on the FI. 5 points
- 3.20 Failure to train all staff and store representatives who conduct cash register transactions in WIC procedures and requirements. 5 points
- 3.21 Charging WIC for the Maine Bottle Bill deposits. 3 points
- 3.22 Requiring WIC participants to buy specific brands when the brands are not stipulated on the WIC FI or in the WIC Authorized Food List. 3 points
- 3.23 Substituting or allow substitution of one WIC authorized food for another WIC authorized food that is not on the WIC participant's FI. 5 points
- 3.24 Requiring WIC participants to make a cash purchase to transact a WIC FI. 7 points

VM-12: Vendor Operations –Changes to accommodate the eWIC process.

Cost Containment Measures Recommended by FNS



The method by which we determine our **Maximum Allowable Reimbursement (MAR) Level** for food items authorized by WIC is being updated as of October 1, 2014. For each Vendor Peer Group (Peer A are larger chain stores and Peer C are smaller independent stores) we use your price surveys to determine the average price of WIC foods. We will no longer be using a % formula to calculate the MAR. Instead the MAR for products will be the average price (currently taken from your price surveys) plus two standard deviations based on your Peer group. We will be mailing notices to Vendors who currently have prices that exceed the new MAR. We will continue to conduct price surveys on a quarterly basis until eWIC is rolled out state wide at which time the MAR will likely be recalculated by the system on a weekly basis to allow us to more quickly react to changing market prices.

eWIC Informational Meetings

A **big** thank you to all of you who came to our eWIC informational meetings last week. We hope that the information that was provided will help you in getting ready for this new system of payment to vendors. Your comments and engagement will certainly help us refine our eWIC system to serve the vendors and participants in the best way possible. Stay in touch with any questions that come up for you. Remember that CDP and FIS are the only organizations that should be contacting you to follow up on the surveys you completed about your ECR systems.



It Scanned So It's Allowed, Right?

The answer is "not necessarily". You must always make sure the item being scanned is listed on the WIC check. Just because the item scans, that does not mean it can be purchased on the particular WIC check being used. It is the responsibility of the cashier to verify that the customer is getting the right items. Politely offer to help the customer select the correct items if they have chosen wrong ones.

A WIC check will reject at the bank if it is over the maximum allowed for that check type. Also, selling the wrong items is a common reason a check rejects. Additionally, allowing wrong items is a violation of federal regulations and your store can be disqualified from the WIC Program if this happens in two or more transactions. If this happens, WIC will notify the SNAP Program of the disqualification, and your store could be disqualified by SNAP, too.

DHHS Non-Discrimination Notice

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, or national origin, in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities, or its hiring or employment practices. This notice is provided as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Maine Human Rights Act and Executive Order Regarding State of Maine Contracts for Services. Questions, concerns, complaints or requests for additional information regarding the ADA may be forwarded to DHHS' ADA Compliance/EEO Coordinators, 11 State House Station – 221 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333, 207-287-4289 (V), 207-287-3488 (V), TTY users call Maine relay 711. Individuals who need auxiliary aids for effective communication in program and services of DHHS are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance/EEO Coordinators. This notice is available in alternate formats, upon request.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Questions? Need supplies? Contact Us.
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